


MEMORANDUM

TO: Marilyn Balcombe  
Roger Berliner  
Nat Bottingheimer  
Francoise Carrier  
Marc Elrich  
Lisa Fadden  
Jonathan Genn  
David Hauck  
Art Holmes  
David McDonough  
Darrell Mobley  
Henry Montes  
Rich Parsons  
Craig Simoneau  
Tina Slater  
Francine Waters  
Dan Wilhelm

From: Mark Winston 

Subject: Memorandum No. 1  
Task Force Work Plan and Initial Meetings

Date: March 2, 2011

Cc: Brian Feldman, *ex officio*  
Rob Garagiola, *ex officio*  
Steve Silverman, *ex officio*  
Tom Street, *ex officio*  
Designee of Rep. Van Hollen, *ex officio*

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Thanks very much for agreeing to serve as a member of the County Executive's Transit Task Force. It will be challenging and interesting work.

The purpose of this initial Memorandum is to deliver a copy of the Task Force Work Plan, which I have developed in cooperation with the Office of the County Executive, and to also advise you of the schedule and agenda for the initial meetings of the Task Force.

The Task Force has been invited to a meeting of stakeholders regarding the bus rapid transit (BRT) feasibility study. That meeting will be held on Friday, March 18, 2011, in the lobby level auditorium in the Executive Office Building, 101 Monroe St., Rockville, Maryland 20850, from 2:00 to 4:00pm. At that time, the staff

of the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) will brief those present on a BRT feasibility study MCDOT has commissioned. While this is not a meeting of the Task Force *per se*, as you will see when you read the introductory portion of the Work Plan, getting “up to speed” on the BRT study is an important element of the background information we need as we begin our work. I encourage all Task Force members to attend. Based on input received at this meeting, and other input, MCDOT anticipates that its final draft of the study will be completed, delivered to the County Council and made public by the end of April. The Task Force will be able to use this report as a primary source of information during its subsequent deliberations.

The first session of the Task Force will be on Wednesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2011, from 7:00 to 9:00 pm in the lobby level auditorium in the Executive Office Building in Rockville. The agenda for that session will be a presentation from Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) staff regarding proposed federal “New Start” transit projects that are currently under development. This presentation will address project status and a discussion of major issues surrounding these projects.

The second session of the Task Force will be held on Wednesday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2011, from 7:00 to 9:00pm in the ninth floor conference room of the Executive Office Building. This will be the regular location of our meetings unless otherwise indicated. The planned agenda of this meeting will be three (3) briefings. The first will be from Mr. Gus Bauman, chair of the Governor’s Blue Ribbon Transportation Commission, dealing with the future of the State’s Transportation Trust Fund. The second will be from Executive Branch staff relating to the County’s authority to establish special taxing districts to fund transportation infrastructure. The third will be a briefing from MCDOT staff on the scope and quality of performance of existing transit facilities and services operating within the County.

If you refer to the introductory portion of the Work Plan, you will note that our goal initially is to ensure that Task Force members have a common base of information on subjects that will impact our deliberations. In particular, the stakeholders’ meeting of March 18<sup>th</sup>, and the first and second sessions of the Task Force, on March 23<sup>rd</sup> and April 6<sup>th</sup>, will address items 1, 2, 3, 5 and 8 referred to in the introductory portion of the Work Plan.

The third session of the Task Force will be held on Wednesday, April 20, 2011, from 7:00 to 9:00 pm. The agenda for that session will be the first phase of a multi-part discussion of the Basic Questions set forth in Part I of the Work Plan. In particular, these questions will include the following:

What kind of a rapid transit system do we want? What does a successful rapid transit system look like? What does the definition of a “comprehensive” and “effective” system mean? Who does such a system serve? What objective measures do we have to describe what we are trying to achieve? For example, what are our ridership goals? What impact do we

want to have on the reduction of vehicular traffic? What impact do we want to have on environmental health and safety? What impact do we want to have on the ability and timing of private parties to commence and complete residential and commercial real estate development? What immediate, mid-term and long range impact do we want the system to be developed to have?

The fourth session of the Task Force will be held on Wednesday, May 4, 2011 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm. At that session, Task Force Member Lisa Fadden has agreed to coordinate a presentation giving the Task Force a general background in how a public/private partnership might work in the development of a transit system. This presentation will, among other things, cover the information referred to in item 4 of the introductory portion of the Work Plan. Following that presentation, the Task Force will continue its discussion of the Basic Questions begun during the third session.

The fifth session of the Task Force will be held on May 18, 2011 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm. The agenda for that session will be to receive a briefing on existing and planned BRT systems in other jurisdictions<sup>1</sup>. This relates to item 6 in the introductory portion of the Work Plan. Time permitting, at this session, the Task Force will continue its discussion of the Basic Questions.

At the sixth session of the Task Force, to be held on June 1, 2011, the Task Force will address the questions set forth in Part III of the Work Plan. This discussion will continue at the seventh session of the Task Force, to be held on June 22, 2011.

Following the seventh session, we will take a deep breath. I will informally consult with members of the Task Force regarding the progress we have made, what additional background information the group believes it needs, and how and when we should solicit the views of interested persons in the public and private sectors who have not already made their views known to the Task Force. At that point we may also want to consider making tentative decisions about the kind of system in general that we want to develop, so that we can move to the stage of concrete consideration of issues relating to planning, engineering, construction, finance, ownership, and operation of such a system. At that point, we may decide to form committees to address specific areas so that simultaneous consideration of these topics can go forward.

I look forward to seeing you at the stakeholders' briefing on March 18<sup>th</sup> and the first session of the Task Force on March 23<sup>rd</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The Task Force will consider whether "field trips" to visit jurisdictions with existing BRT systems are worthwhile. In anticipation of this, I am working with the County Executive's staff to arrange such "field trips" if the Task Force thinks they are advisable. This will be constrained by budgetary and time considerations. I will inform Task Force members of plans in this regard as soon as possible.